

Message Text

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47

ACTION NEA-09

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 SSO-00 INRE-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05

PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 NEAE-00 SAM-01 IO-10

ACDA-05 AF-06 /082 W

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O R 211543Z JAN 75

FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7448

INFO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY MUSCAT

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

C O N F I D E N T I A L LONDON 00908

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PFOR, MASS, MU, UK, US

SUBJECT: BRITISH PRESS GUIDANCE ON MASIRAH LANDING
RIGHTS; REPLY TO US OPERATIONAL QUERY

1. IN REPLY TO ONE OR TWO PRESS QUERIES JANUARY 20,
FCO WAS AUTHORIZED ATTRIBUTED STATEMENT THAT US HAS
ASKED FOR OCCASIONAL USE OF AIRFIELD FACILITIES ON
MASIRAH ISLAND AND HMG IS CONSIDERING THIS REQUEST IN
CONJUNCTION WITH OMANI AND US AUTHORITIES. ON UNATTRIB-
UTED BASIS, FCO BRIEFERS AUTHORIZED TO DENY CATEGORICAL-
LY THAT THERE IS ANY QUESTION OF US BASE ON MASIRAH.
THEY COULD SAY SULTAN HAS BEEN ASKED ABOUT OCCASIONAL
LANDINGS ONLY. THEY COULD ALSO NOTE THAT, BY 1958
AGREEMENT WITH OMAN, MASIRAH IS AN RAF STAGING POST, NOT
A BASE.

2. FINANCIAL TIMES JANUARY 21 REFLECTS SUCH AN FCO
BRIEFING. AFTER QUOTING STATEMENT FOR FCO ATTRIBUTION,
HOWEVER, ARTICLE SPECULATES THAT, ALTHOUGH FCO DECLINED
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TO ELABORATE, "THE MOVE CAN ONLY BE SEEN IN CONNECTION

WITH THE US EXPANSION OF FACILITIES ON THE ISLAND OF DIEGO GARCIA IN THE INDIAN OCEAN." THIS LINE OF ANALYSIS ALSO INTERESTS ONE OR TWO OTHER BRITISH CORRESPONDENTS WHO HAVE APPROACHED EMBASSY FOR BRIEFINGS AND ARE TEMPORARILY BEING HELD OFF. WE SHALL USE GUIDANCE CONTAINED STATE 13448, PARTICULARLY NEAR END, AND WOULD WELCOME ANY FURTHER ELABORATION DEPARTMENT CAN AUTHORIZE.

3. WE ARE AWARE OF BRITISH REPLY TO USG QUERY ON EXCESS FUEL STORAGE CAPACITY AT MASIRAH, WHICH AMOUNTS TO NEED FOR REPLENISHMENT BY AIR DURING MONSOON MONTHS APRIL - SEPTEMBER (UNLESS IT WERE POSSIBLE, AND DESIRABLE, TO CONSTRUCT ADDITIONAL FUEL STORAGE FACILITIES).

4. MEANWHILE, BRITISH ARE AWAITING USG REPLIES TO THEIR RELATED OPERATIONAL QUERIES.

SPIERS

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Message Attributes

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